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(NIXON)

WASHINGTON--THE WHITE HOUSE TODAY CHALLENGED A STATEMENT BY FORMER VICE PRESIDENT NIXON THAT PRESIDENT KENNEDY WAS INFORMED DURING THE 1960 CAMPAIGN THAT CUBAN EXILES WERE BEING TRAINED BY THIS COUNTRY FOR AN INVASION OF THEIR HOMELAND.

NIXON IN HIS NEW BOOK, "SIX CRISES," WROTE THAT HE FELT KENNEDY, THEN A PRESIDENTIAL NOMINEE, ENDANGERED THE U.S. FOREIGN POLICY BY CALLING DURING THE CAMPAIGN FOR U.S. INTERVENTION IN CUBA.

THE FORMER VICE PRESIDENT SAID KENNEDY HAD BEEN TOLD IN SECRET INTELLIGENCE BRIEFINGS OF EARLY PREPARATIONS FOR A CUBAN INVASION.

THE WHITE HOUSE SAID THIS WAS NOT TRUE AND SUGGESTED THAT NIXON'S ACCOUNT WAS "APPARENTLY BASED ON A MISUNDERSTANDING."

"BUT IN THE LIGHT OF THE ACCOUNT IN MR. NIXON'S BOOK IT IS NECESSARY TO SAY THAT THE THEN-SENATOR KENNEDY WAS NOT TOLD BEFORE THE ELECTION OF 1960 OF THE TRAINING OF TROOPS OUTSIDE OF CUBA OR OF ANY PLANS FOR 'SUPPORTING AN INVASION OF CUBA!'"
3/20--JR 1258 FES